

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA CLASS SPECIFICATION

Class Title: Unit Director

Class Code: 50585

A. Purpose:

Manages a unit or department, implementing program plans to enhance the growth, health, comfort, treatment, and safety of patients assigned to the unit.

B. Distinguishing Feature:

The Unit Director has the responsibility for unit and/or department budget, selection and evaluation of staff for individual program plans and meeting federal, state and institutional guidelines.

C. Functions:

(These are examples only; any one position may not include all of the listed examples nor do the listed examples include all functions which may be found in positions of this class.)

1. Supervises and directs subordinates activities to ensure patient programming and training will meet facility, state, and federal policies, rules, and regulations.
2. Supervises subordinate staff to ensure that the objectives of the work unit are met.
 - a. Interviews and selects staff.
 - b. Provides training and work direction.
 - c. Approves leave requests.
 - d. Addresses staff problems and recommends disciplinary action.
 - e. Conducts performance appraisals and completes performance documents.
3. Plans and presents unit/department or institutional philosophies to communities, organizations, parents, and/or other interested individuals to ensure public understanding of the facility's role in the community.
4. Develops, reviews, and revises facility policies and procedures individually or in a group activity and submits recommendations to administrative superior for approval to reflect changing state and federal rules and regulations.
5. Develops budget requests, plans and authorizes unit/department expenditures to provide a therapeutic learning environment for assigned patients.
6. Performs other work as assigned.

D. Reporting Relationships:

Subordinates typically reporting to this classification are speech pathologists, special education teachers, psychiatric social workers, social workers, youth counselors, activities therapists, psychologists, chemical dependency supervisors, and clerical staff. The psychologists, speech pathologists, activities therapists and special education teachers provide written patient programs specific to their area of expertise. The social workers, psychiatric social workers, youth counselors, and chemical dependency supervisors assess the social, mental, psychiatric, and emotional needs of patients.

E: Challenges and Problems:

Challenges include coordinating the overall operation of the unit/department; selection, appraisal evaluation, discipline, and training are difficult because of budget restraints, finding qualified applicants and the extensive training required developing and implementing program planning; developing and maintaining effective communication between unit/department staff and the patient's family or legal guardian. Also challenging is ensuring the environment is safe, stimulating, and meets the State Life Safety Code and ensuring that patients' programs meet the personal needs of each patient.

Problems include interpreting and ensuring development and implementation of patient programming and care with changing federal, state, and institutional guidelines to provide appropriate services.

F. Decision-making Authority:

Decisions include assigning of work to subordinates, hiring and disciplinary actions; approving budgetary expenditures and policies and procedures for the unit/department; when to develop staff training programs; determining patient living assignments; approving staff travel to conventions, seminars, or in-service training; when to develop immediate and long-range patient plans; and dealing with problems or concerns of parents, guardians, and other agencies and/or departments.

Decisions referred include disciplinary actions of staff regarding patient abuse, approval of policies and procedures affecting other unit/departments or other agencies, requests for additional staff, and decisions affecting the overall budget of the facility.

G. Contact with Others:

Daily contact with the personnel department regarding consultation on hires or disciplinary actions; and parents, guardians, or unit/department visitors to discuss patient progress or institutional objectives. Weekly contacts are made to various organizations including adjustment training centers, other institutions and/or agencies to discuss patient referral, admissions, placement, and progress.

H. Working Conditions:

Works in a typical office environment except when monitoring resident/training or living quarters which is a daily routine task. Due to the aggressive or assaultive behavior of the patients, it is sometimes necessary to physically restrain a patient.

J. Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

Knowledge of:

- administrative practices and procedures;
- budget practices and procedures;
- the philosophy and policies of the institution;
- counseling methods and techniques;
- principles and practices of supervision.

Ability to:

- exercise independent judgement within established guidelines;
- supervise;
- establish and maintain a good working relationship with other units, departments, subordinates, and patients;

- develop and install administrative procedures and operations and to evaluate their efficiency and effectiveness;
- interpret and apply general policies to specific situations.